



## RECORDS MANAGEMENT ADVICE

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Basics of Records Management:

### **Differences Between the State Archives and the State Records Center**

Purpose: Provide guidance to state government agencies regarding the difference between the State Archives and the State Records Center when transferring material to fulfill the requirements of approved retention schedules.

Although many people commonly use the term “archiving” to describe document storage, the term is actually reserved only for specific records. The Maine State Archives houses both the State Records Center (Records Management) and the Archives Services sections. Records that are sent to the State Records Center are “transferred” to them, while records sent to the Archives Services section are “archived.”

Both of these sections of the Maine State Archives serve the roles of storing records and providing reference services, but there are several fundamental differences, outlined below:

**State Records Center:** *(Located in BABLO Building, behind Maine State Lottery in Hallowell)*

- Serves as an off-site storage facility for state agency records that remain under the legal custody of those agencies
- Houses only those records that are subject to records retention schedules and have not yet reached the end of their retention period
- Stores records based on agency retentions for administrative, fiscal or legal purposes, which are then destroyed (according to schedule)
- Only allows the agency of origin to access the records
- Delivers records back to the agency of origin upon request
- Assigns each box of records a unique bar-code number for inventory control, tracking and reference

**State Archives:** *(Located in Cultural Building, next to the Maine State Museum in Augusta)*

- Only stores records that have historical value
- Only accepts records that have completed their retention period and are considered permanent
- Has legal custody of the material transferred to the State Archives when it is received
- Allows record access to anyone, under the terms of the Freedom of Access Act
- Does not allow records to leave the building
- Catalogs its holdings by subject, content and origin

Additional advice regarding the management of public records is available at  
<http://www.maine.gov/sos/arc/records/state/statetraining.html>

*“The right record, to the right person, at the right time, at the lowest possible cost”*